



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 2

290 BROADWAY

NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

SEP 18 2006

Ms. Amy Jackson-Grove
Assistant Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building
Clinton Avenue and N. Pearl Street
Albany, New York 12207

Dear Ms. Jackson-Grove:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the draft environmental impact statement (draft EIS) for the project entitled **NY 347 Reconstruction - Northern State Parkway to NY 25A, Towns of Smithtown, Islip, and Brookhaven** (CEQ# 20060317). Our review is pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

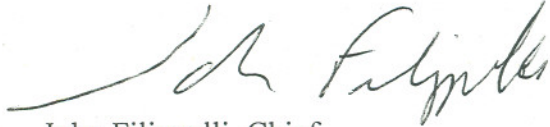
The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), proposes to reconstruct NY 347 for a distance of 15 miles from the Northern State Parkway to NY 25A. The draft EIS states that the improvements are necessary to provide for projected traffic demand and to improve roadway safety. The draft EIS evaluated two alternatives; the No Build, and reconstructing NY 347 to an eight lane section from the Northern State Parkway to NY 454 and a six lane arterial from NY 454 to NY 25A with some variations and options for grade separated intersections. We provided comments on scoping materials for the project in November 2004.

Overall, the draft EIS is very well written. The document presents the issues in appropriate detail. The manner in which the information is presented (i.e., the resources involved, a description of the types of impacts that can be expected from road facilities, a discussion of the actual project impacts and proposed mitigation) allows the reader to clearly understand the potential impact that may occur with the implementation of the proposed alternatives. We particularly appreciated the discussion of cumulative and secondary impacts. We believe that this draft EIS is a very good example of effective disclosure of environmental and social impacts and should be used as a model for future documents.

We support the NYSDOT's efforts to pursue the environmental initiatives discussed in the draft EIS. We are encouraged by the proposed water quality improvements. A great concern for EPA is nonpoint source runoff entering the Nassau-Suffolk County Sole Source Aquifer and the Setauket Pine Barrens Special Groundwater Protection Area system. With that in mind, we are supportive of NYSDOT's efforts to create and maintain vegetated swales and closed drainage systems in order to reduce the potential impact from roadway pollutants on the local surface waters and groundwater.

In conclusion, based on our review and in accordance with EPA policy, we have rated this draft EIS as LO-1, indicating that we have Lack of Objections (LO) about the project and that the draft EIS contains sufficient information (1), to adequately address the issues. We commend FHWA and NYSDOT on producing a very well written and thorough NEPA document. Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Should you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact David Carlson of my staff at (212) 637-3502.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Filippelli". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the beginning.

John Filippelli, Chief
Strategic Planning and Multi-Media Programs Branch